

Amendments to the Claims

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application.

Claims 1-113 (Cancelled).

114. (Presently Amended) Software stored on a computer-readable storage medium at a user station, comprising:

an online service selector function, stored and executable at the user station, that enables a user at the user station to select among a plurality of available online services to support an application function;

a common communications function, stored and executable at the user station, that directs establishment and use of a communication link between the user station and each online service, when the online service is selected; and

one or more service-independent ~~a plurality of~~ graphical user interfaces ~~functions~~ stored and executable at the user station, ~~and~~ associated with the said application function, and ~~used~~ configured to present the user with different customized graphical user interface functions for different selected online services in support of the said application function.

115. (Previously Presented) The software as set forth in Claim 114, further comprising a set of translators and protocol drivers that facilitate establishment of the communication link between the user station and the selected online service.

116. (Previously Presented) The software as set forth in Claim 114, further comprising a protocol translation function that facilitates establishment of the communication link between the user station and the selected online service,

117. (Previously Presented) The software as set forth in Claim 114, further comprising an application programming interface that interconnects the online service selector function and the communications function.

118. (Previously Presented) The software as set forth in Claim 114, further comprising a data transport function that effectuates data transfers between the user station and the selected online service via the established communication link.

119. (Previously Presented) The software as set forth in Claim 118, wherein the data transport function uses an object manifest to effectuate data transfers.

120. (Previously Presented) The software as set forth in Claim 119, further comprising an application programming interface through which the object manifest can be modified.

121. (Presently Amended) The software as set forth in Claim 120, wherein the application programming interface interconnects the data ~~transfer~~ transport function and a higher-level software entity that can be invoked to modify the object manifest.

122. (Presently Amended) The software as set forth in Claim 120, wherein the application programming interface interconnects the data ~~transfer~~ transport function and a high-level user interface that enables the user at the user station to modify the object manifest.

123. (Previously Presented) The software as set forth in Claim 118, further comprising a plurality of user interface functions that enable the user to submit functional requests to the selected online service.

124. (Previously Presented) The software as set forth in Claim 114, wherein the online service selector function presents the user with a list of the available online services.

125. (Previously Presented) The software as set forth in Claim 114, wherein the user station is configured for communications with a multiplicity of independently-operated data sources via a non-proprietary network, and further comprises a data transport function that effectuates data transfers between the user station and a selected one of the independently-operated data sources via the non-proprietary network.

126. (Previously Presented) The software as set forth in Claim 125, wherein the non-proprietary network comprises the Internet.

127. (Previously Presented) The software as set forth in claim 114, wherein portions of the software used to present the customized graphical user interface functions are downloaded from the selected online service in advance of their execution.

128. (Previously Presented) The software as set forth in Claim 114, further comprising a plurality of database functions stored at the user station, wherein the user is presented with a different customized database function for each different online service by a corresponding one of said database functions.

129. (Previously Presented) The software as set forth in Claim 128, wherein portions of the software used to present the customized database function are downloaded from the corresponding online service in advance of their execution.

130. (Previously Presented) The software as set forth in Claim 114, wherein the presentation of each of said customized graphical user interface functions is facilitated by use of a common general purpose user interface software package stored and executable at the user station.

131. (Previously Presented) The software as set forth in Claim 114, wherein each of the customized graphical user interface functions operates as a customized element of a common user interface software package stored and executable at the user station.

132. (Previously Presented) The software as set forth in Claim 114, wherein the number of available online services can be expanded through use of the software to update itself from a remote source.

133. (Presently Amended) A user station, comprising a processor and software stored on a computer-readable storage medium, the software including:

an online service selector function, stored and executable at the user station, that enables a user at the user station to select among a plurality of available online services to support an application function;

a common communications function, stored and executable at the user station, that directs establishment and use of a communication link between the user station and each online service, when the online service is selected; and

one or more service-independent a plurality of graphical user interfaces functions stored and executable at the user station, ~~and~~ associated with the said application function, and ~~used~~ configured to present the user with different customized graphical user interface functions for different selected online services in support of the said application function.

134. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 133, wherein the software further comprises a set of translators and protocol drivers that facilitate establishment of the communication link between the user station and the selected online service.

135. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 133, wherein the software further comprises a protocol translation function that facilitates establishment of the communication link between the user station and the selected online service.

136. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 133, wherein the software further comprises an application programming interface that interconnects the online service selector function and the communications function.

137. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 133, wherein the software further comprises a data transport function that effectuates data transfers between the user station and the selected online service via the established communication link.

138. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 137, wherein the data transport function uses an object manifest to effectuate data transfers.

139. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 138, wherein the software further comprises an application programming interface through which the object manifest can be modified.

140. (Presently Amended) The user station as set forth in Claim 139, wherein the application programming interface interconnects the data ~~transfer~~ transport function and a higher-level software entity that can be invoked to modify the object manifest.

141. (Presently Amended) The user station as set forth in Claim 139, wherein the application programming interface interconnects the data ~~transfer~~ transport function and a high-level user interface that enables the user at the user station to modify the object manifest.

142. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 137, wherein the software further comprises a plurality of user interface functions that enable the user to submit functional requests to the selected online service.

143. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 133, wherein the online service selector function presents the user with a list of the available online services.

144. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 133, wherein the user station is configured for communications with a multiplicity of independently-operated data sources via a non-proprietary network, and the software further comprises a data transport function that effectuates data transfers between the user station and a selected one of the independently-operated data sources via the non-proprietary network.

145. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 144, wherein the non-proprietary network comprises the Internet.

146. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 133, wherein portions of the software used to present the customized graphical user interface functions are downloaded from the selected online service in advance of their execution.

147. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 133, wherein the software further comprises a plurality of database functions stored at the user station, wherein the user is presented with a different customized database function for each different online service by a corresponding one of said database functions.

148. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 147, wherein portions of the software used to present the customized database function are downloaded from the corresponding online service in advance of their execution.

149. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 133, wherein presentation of each of said customized graphical user interface functions is facilitated by use of a common general purpose user interface software package stored and executable at the user station.

150. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 133, wherein each of the customized graphical user interface functions operates as a customized element of a common user interface software package stored and executable at the user station.

151. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 133, wherein the number of available online services can be expanded through use of the software to update itself from a remote source.

152. (Previously Presented) The user station as set forth in Claim 133, wherein the user station is a personal computer.